When a person uses a classifier like CL:1 to represent a person in a signed sentence what function is it serving?

a. Adjective (description of a noun)
b. Adverb (modifying a verb)
c. Predicate (verb phrase)
d. Subject (who or what the sentence is about)

Here is a simple ASL discourse using a classifier. Maybe it will help you answer the question.

BOY CL:1-move-to-me. HE SMILE, CL:1-turn-around-go-away-from-me. WEIRD!

Go to the bottom of this email for the answer.

Answer: "c" Predicate (verb phrase). Classifiers in ASL (more recently called depiction verbs) function as verb phrases (technically called predicate phrases). The predicate phrase in a sentence is the part of the sentence that tells you what the subject of the sentence does or looks like or where the subject is located etc.

If the ASL discourse above is translated you can see how the classifier is functioning as the predicate phrase. The bolded and colored parts in both passages below show the classifiers in the ASL discourse and the predicate phrases in the English sentences.

BOY **CL:1-move-to-me**. HE **SMILE, CL:1-turn-around-go-away-from-me**. WEIRD!

A boy **came up to me**. He **smiled, turned around and walked away**. That was weird!